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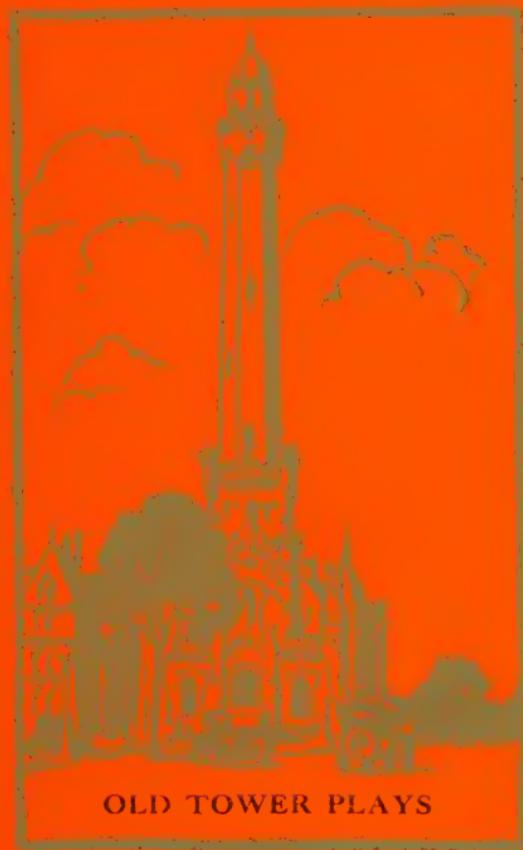


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**THE POOR BOY WHO
BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR**

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

A PLAY FOR BOYS
BY
PERRY BOYER CORNEAU



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THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR



This play, while it may be given indoors, is primarily intended for outdoor presentation. The stage in this case need be only an open space with bushes as a background. The camp fire—which the Poor Boy keeps going during the play—gives the illumination, if the play is presented at night. The fire should be placed a little to one side of the stage and between the actors and the audience. In order to keep the light from shining in the eyes of the onlookers the fire should be made in a hole about a foot deep and further screened by a boulder or a heap of large stones or turf. Entrances and exits are made from and into the circle of darkness beyond the fire-light.

The Vision which appears to the Poor Boy stands on a ladder concealed in the bushes and makes his appearance from among the leaves. To heighten the effect the light from a pocket electric light, held by someone hidden in the leaves below, may be thrown on his face. It also may be effective to have his lines delivered in unison with a single note played upon the violin or some wind instrument. The spirit voices in the distance should be rendered by as many voices as possible as far away as it is convenient for them to get, and very softly.

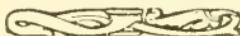
The teepee of the Chief may be shown or not as desired. If the performance takes place outdoors at night the costumes need be only of the simplest, blankets and easily-made feather head-dresses being sufficient.

All but the Poor Boy wear large feather head-dresses. He has only one small feather stuck carelessly in his hair.

The Medicine Stick may be a pole decorated at one end with feathers and leather thongs.



PEOPLE OF THE PLAY



The Poor Boy

The Chief

The Hostile Indian

The Vision

Six Warriors

The story of the play is based on an ancient legend of the Pawnee tribe.





THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR



ACT ONE

(The POOR BOY comes in and throws some sticks on the fire.. He then sits down beside it.)

(The FIRST WARRIOR comes in.)

POOR BOY

Give me something to eat.

(The WARRIOR stops and looks at him.)

FIRST WARRIOR

What do you want something to eat for?

POOR BOY

Because I'm hungry.

FIRST WARRIOR

Why are you hungry?

POOR BOY

Because I haven't anything to eat.

FIRST WARRIOR

Why don't you get something to eat?

POOR BOY

That's what I'm trying to do; but you won't give me anything.

FIRST WARRIOR

Go into the woods and kill game.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

POOR BOY

I can't. I have no weapons. I am only a poor boy who has to sit by the fire to keep warm. I can't even get myself warm clothes.

FIRST WARRIOR

Well, here's something for you.

(He tosses some food to the POOR BOY and crossing over to the other side sits down on the ground. The POOR BOY holds up the piece of food, which is very tiny, and looks at it a moment before he eats it.)

(The SECOND and THIRD WARRIORS come in.)

SECOND WARRIOR

Have they brought the medicine stick out yet?

POOR BOY

I don't know. I'm hungry. Give me something to eat.

SECOND WARRIOR

Eat?

(Turning to THIRD WARRIOR)

Too much eating—Bad—bad—

(They cross over and sit down beside the FIRST WARRIOR.)

(The FOURTH WARRIOR comes in.)

POOR BOY

Give me something to eat.

FOURTH WARRIOR

I gave you something to eat two nights ago. Do you want to be eating all the time?

(He goes over and sits down by the others.)

(The FIFTH WARRIOR comes in wrapped in a blanket.)

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

POOR BOY

Give me something to eat. Give me something to eat.

(The FIFTH WARRIOR unwraps his head very slowly. Then he looks hard at the POOR BOY for a long time.)

FIFTH WARRIOR

Ugh!

(He slowly wraps his head up again and crosses over and sits with the others. The SIXTH WARRIOR comes in.)

POOR BOY

Big Warrior, Big Warrior, give me something to eat.

SIXTH WARRIOR

Get a bow and arrow and a tomahawk and go into the woods and get your own food. When the Big Warrior was only five years old he had already killed a bear.

(The SIXTH WARRIOR pounds his chest proudly.)
You are lazy. Ugh!

(He strikes the POOR BOY and then goes over and sits down with the other WARRIORS.)

(The CHIEF comes in carrying the medicine stick. The WARRIORS gather around him.)

POOR BOY

I'm hungry.

(Nobody pays any attention to him.)

CHIEF

Here is the sacred medicine stick. I am going to put it here in the center of our camp so that it will bring us luck in the hunting. For the season of abundant game is now upon us.

(He fastens the medicine stick upright in the ground.)
Warriors, watch it well.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

FIRST WARRIOR

No one would dare to steal it from the middle of our camp with so many brave warriors about.

(The SIXTH WARRIOR pounds his chest proudly.)

CHIEF

But guard it well just the same. The hostile tribe down by the river would give anything to have it. It is a powerful charm and brings good luck in hunting. Watch it well.

THIRD WARRIOR

Trust us, great Chief. We are mighty warriors.

No one would dare to come into our camp.

(The SIXTH WARRIOR pounds his chest. The FIFTH WARRIOR unwraps his head slowly.)

FIFTH WARRIOR

Ugh!

(He wraps his head up again and stalks away.)

CHIEF

I go to my teepee. I am very old. And an old man needs sleep.

(The HOSTILE INDIAN sticks his head out of the bushes. No one notices him. He disappears.)

(The CHIEF is going out; but the POOR BOY stops him.)

POOR BOY

Big Chief, listen!

CHIEF

Speak. The old Chief listens, even to a poor boy.

POOR BOY

I am hungry. I am hungry all the time. The warriors ask me why I do not go out and kill game. I can't. I have no weapons. Will you

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

give the Poor Boy weapons so that he can go and kill game and get enough to eat and skins to keep him warm?

SIXTH WARRIOR

(To the FIFTH WARRIOR)

Do you hear what the Poor Boy is asking the Chief?

FIFTH WARRIOR

(Unwrapping his head)

Ugh!

(He wraps himself up again.)

CHIEF

Why should I give you weapons? You are only a poor boy. You would not know how to use them.

POOR BOY

Great Chief, if I had weapons I would be a mighty warrior. I can run farther and faster than any of the braves.

(He stoops and picks up a heavy log and throws it on the fire.)

No one of the warriors could lift so heavy a log.

THIRD WARRIOR

The Poor Boy thinks that would make him a great warrior.

(The WARRIORS grunt in derision.)

CHIEF

Poor Boy, you speak foolishly. The Warriors are making fun of you. Besides being poor you are

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

too young to become a warrior. Be content;
and keep your warm place by the fire.
Warriors, watch well the sacred medicine stick.

(The CHIEF goes into his tent.)

(The HOSTILE INDIAN puts his head out of the bushes again for a moment.)

POOR BOY

Nobody will give me weapons! What is going to become of me?

FIRST WARRIOR

I shot a wild turkey today. Warriors, gather about the fire and share it with me.

THIRD WARRIOR

I have some big artichokes. We will eat them with the turkey.

SECOND WARRIOR

Something to eat! Ugh! Ugh! Warriors, I can hardly wait for that turkey.

POOR BOY

(Mimicking the SECOND WARRIOR)

You said just now that too much eating was bad
—bad—

It makes a difference who does the eating.

SECOND WARRIOR

Drive this boy away from the fire.

POOR BOY

Oh, please, big warriors, let me stay and have some of the turkey.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

THIRD WARRIOR

If he had his way he would be eating all the time..
I gave him some meat day before yesterday; and
here he is asking for something to eat again!

SIXTH WARRIOR

Drive him away.

(They strike the POOR BOY and drive him away from
the fire. He goes to a little distance, shivering, and
sits with his head hidden in his hands.)
(The WARRIORS gather about the fire and cook and
eat their food.)

FIRST WARRIOR

Put some more wood on the fire.

SECOND WARRIOR

The Chief is becoming an old woman. He thinks
all the time the hostile tribe is going to attack us.

THIRD WARRIOR

They would not dare to. We are the greatest war-
riors in the whole country.

FOURTH WARRIOR

The Chief is afraid the Medicine Stick will be
stolen.

SIXTH WARRIOR

(Pounding his chest.)

He forgets who is on guard.

(The HOSTILE INDIAN, unseen by the WARRIORS,
comes out of the bushes and begins to creep very
slowly toward the place where the Medicine Stick is
standing. He carries a tomahawk ready lifted in his
hand; and every now and then he raises his head to
watch the WARRIORS. And every now and then he
throws himself flat on the grass and lies still for a
moment or so. The WARRIORS about the fire eat
and talk. The POOR BOY sits at a distance with his
head in his hands.)

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

SECOND WARRIOR

That turkey is cooked. I can't wait any longer.

FIRST WARRIOR

(Bending over the fire.)

Yes, it is cooked.

SIXTH WARRIOR

Let us eat.

(They begin to devour the turkey and artichokes.)

FIRST WARRIOR

(To FIFTH WARRIOR)

Will you have a piece of this turkey?

FIFTH WARRIOR

(Unfolding his blanket, quickly this time, and snatching the piece of turkey.)

Ugh!!

SIXTH WARRIOR

I wish the hostile tribe would attack us. Then I could get scalps. I am big warrior, big warrior.

(He pounds his chest.)

FOURTH WARRIOR

Stop! — What is that noise?

(The WARRIORS spring to their feet and look in the direction of the HOSTILE INDIAN, who hides by throwing himself down in the grass and remaining absolutely quiet. The WARRIORS remain silent a moment, listening.)

THIRD WARRIOR

I heard nothing.

SECOND WARRIOR

I heard a sound — something there in the grass.

FIRST WARRIOR

It is the Poor Boy over there.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

SIXTH WARRIOR

Of course.

FOURTH WARRIOR

I thought it might be the hostile tribe attacking.
Their village is only a quarter of a short night's
march away.

SIXTH WARRIOR

They would not dare to attack us.

(The HOSTILE INDIAN begins to crawl toward the
Medicine Stick again.)

FIRST WARRIOR

They dared to attack us two years ago.

SIXTH WARRIOR

Yes, but you should remember, I, the big warrior,
was sick with a fever at the time.

FIFTH WARRIOR

(Unwrapping his blanket and looking at SIXTH WARRIOR.)

Ugh!

(The SIXTH WARRIOR turns and looks at the FIFTH WARRIOR, who quickly wraps his head up again.)

SECOND WARRIOR

(Who has been busy with the turkey.)

Good turkey! Good for people to eat — good
— good —

(He pats his stomach.)

THIRD WARRIOR

Let's sit down by the fire again.

(They sit down.)

FOURTH WARRIOR

Let's tell stories.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

SIXTH WARRIOR

I will tell you about the time that I, the big warrior, scalped four men all by myself.

(The HOSTILE INDIAN has by this time reached the Medicine Stick. He tries to pull it from the ground without getting up. But it is hard to do. So he has to stand up. He pulls the stick from the ground and starts to run. The FIRST WARRIOR sees him and utters a wild yell. All the WARRIORS spring to their feet and pursue the HOSTILE INDIAN except the SIXTH WARRIOR, who, at the first alarm, runs over in the opposite direction and hides behind a pile of rocks or a tree stump. The HOSTILE INDIAN, with a yell of defiance, dives into the bushes. The WARRIORS follow him. Their cries grow fainter in the distance. The POOR BOY gets up and watches, but as he has no weapons, does not join in the pursuit. The CHIEF comes out of his teepee.)

CHIEF

Poor Boy, what has happened?

POOR BOY

Great Chief, I do not know. I was sitting with my head in my hands. I felt very sorrowful. I heard a yell. I looked up. The warriors were chasing someone through the bushes.

(The CHIEF looks around. He notices that the Medicine Stick is gone.)

CHIEF

The Medicine Stick!!! — Misfortune will come upon our tribe! Our Medicine Stick is stolen!

(The WARRIORS return.)

CHIEF

Warriors, where is the Medicine Stick?

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

FIRST WARRIOR

Oh, great Chief, a large band of hostile Indians came upon us as we sat eating before the fire and stole it before we could catch them.

CHIEF

You pursued them. Did you not get it back?

SECOND WARRIOR

Great Chief, they ran too swiftly for us. We are warriors who are not accustomed to run.

POOR BOY

No one can run who is stuffed with turkey.

CHIEF

You are women instead of warriors! Did I not tell you to watch and to watch well? The great Chief is very angry. Without the Medicine Stick bad luck will come to the tribe. Woe! Woe!

FIRST WARRIOR

We will attack their village and bring the Medicine Stick back.

CHIEF

Well spoken! Warriors, will you go on the war-path?

ALL

We will.

FOURTH WARRIOR

(Looking about.)

Where is the Big Warrior?

SECOND WARRIOR

Perhaps he is still pursuing the enemy.

(The SIXTH WARRIOR comes out from his hiding place.)

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

FIRST WARRIOR

The Big Warrior is here!

THIRD WARRIOR

He has been hiding. He was afraid of the enemy.

FIRST WARRIOR

You talk big; but you are a coward.

SECOND WARRIOR

Tell us no more stories of your bravery.

CHIEF

He shall be driven from our village. We shelter no cowards.

SIXTH WARRIOR

Great Chief, the warriors speak without thinking, as always. Does not the great Chief understand why I, the big warrior, remained behind?

FIRST WARRIOR

You remained behind because you were afraid.

CHIEF

Let the Big Warrior speak.

SIXTH WARRIOR

Great Chief, the warriors do not think. I, the big warrior, do think. They all ran after the enemy. Suppose when they were gone the enemy had come into the village from this side. What would they find? Me, the Big Warrior, waiting for them.

CHIEF

You are right. — The Big Warrior is cunning as well as brave.

(The SIXTH WARRIOR pounds his chest.)

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

FIFTH WARRIOR

Ugh!

CHIEF

Are you ready now to go on the war path?

ALL

We are ready.

CHIEF

Then begin the war dance.

(The tom-tom begins to sound.)

But do not start for the village of the enemy until after midnight. Now they are awake because they have just come back from attacking us. Wait until they are asleep. Now begin the dance.

(They begin to sing the War Path Song and to dance the war dance. The POOR BOY looks on as if he would like to take part, but does not dare to. They dance faster and sing more loudly every moment until they are exhausted. One by one they go out.)

CHIEF

(To the WARRIORS as they go out.)
Go, now, and prepare your weapons. Come back to the fire at midnight.

POOR BOY

Great Chief, listen to me. Give me weapons. All the men of the tribe are going on the war path. I will have to stay here alone because I have no tomahawk nor knife nor bow to fight with. Give me weapons so I can fight the enemy and bring the Medicine Stick back.

CHIEF

Only a warrior goes on the war path. You must stay at home and see that the fire does not go out.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

POOR BOY

But great Chief —

CHIEF

Do not bother me.

(The CHIEF goes to his tent.)

(The POOR BOY lies down on the ground and goes to sleep. After he has been asleep a moment or so the fire burns with a greenish flame; and suddenly in the bushes, high above his head, appears a figure with a magnificent head-dress. The figure glows with a strange light. The POOR BOY sits up in wonder.)

VISION

Poor Boy, your voice has been heard in the Spirit Land. Your tears have fallen like rain upon us. When you have been hungry we have been hungry too. The Great Spirit has sent me to tell you that your days of trouble are almost over. Do as I tell you; and you will become the greatest warrior of your tribe.

POOR BOY

What shall I do, O mighty Spirit?

VISION

Go at once to the Chief and tell him what you have seen. He knows me. Tell him I bid him give you weapons. Say it is my command that you be allowed to go on the war path with the warriors.

POOR BOY

But, O wonderful Spirit, he will not believe me. He will not listen to me because I am only a poor boy.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

VISION

He will listen to the word of a Spirit. Show him this sign.

(The VISION crosses his arms above his head.)

VISION

Do as I command you; and have no fear. Those who are poor and those who are ill-treated are not without friends. The race of Spirits hear and do not forget.

O-ha-ye! O-ha-ye!

VOICES

(As if from an immense distance.)

O-ha-ye! O-ha-ye!

(The VISION vanishes. The POOR BOY jumps to his feet, rubbing his eyes.)

POOR BOY

Great Chief! Great Chief!

CHIEF

(Coming from his teepee.)

Has the village been attacked? —— Why do you make so much noise?

POOR BOY

I have seen a vision. A Spirit came to me. He bids you give me weapons. He commands you to let me go on the war path.

CHIEF

Poor Boy, you have been dreaming. Do not disturb me any more.

POOR BOY

The Spirit said you knew him. He made this sign.

(The POOR BOY makes the sign.)

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

CHIEF

You know the sacred sign. The Spirit must indeed have appeared to you. Come with me; and I will give you weapons.

POOR BOY

Thank you, Great Chief.

(The CHIEF and the POOR BOY go out.)

(The tom-tom begins to beat softly. The WARRIORS enter.)

FIRST WARRIOR

It is time.

THIRD WARRIOR

I can hardly wait to feel their scalps in my fingers.

(The CHIEF comes in followed by the POOR BOY.
The POOR BOY has now the arms of a warrior.)

SECOND WARRIOR

Look! He has given the Poor Boy weapons.

CHIEF

I have given the Poor Boy weapons. He is going with you to bring back the Medicine Stick. And woe to you if you do not bring it back! Terrible misfortunes will befall our tribe. To the warrior who brings it back I will make splendid gifts. He shall also share my power with me. I have spoken. Go!

(The CHIEF goes out.)

FIRST WARRIOR

We cannot take this Poor Boy with us. He is so clumsy the enemy will hear him coming and be prepared.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

SIXTH WARRIOR

He must not come with us. He has not the courage of a warrior.

THIRD WARRIOR

It would be a disgrace to have him with us.

POOR BOY

I am going with you. The Chief said so.

FIRST WARRIOR

You may go. But you will have to go alone. Come, Warriors!

(The sound of the tom-tom grows louder. The WARRIORS begin to sing the War Path Song. They begin the dance. Then, single file, they disappear in the bushes. Their song becomes fainter in the distance. The POOR BOY stands looking after them.)

POOR BOY

Then I will go alone. I will show them. I will fight the enemy alone. And I will bring back the Medicine Stick, too. They shall see that I am a warrior. The Spirits are my friends. I am a warrior at last!

(He begins to sing the War Path Song and creeps off into the bushes.)

END OF THE FIRST ACT





ACT TWO

SCENE: The same as the preceding act.

(The CHIEF comes out of his teepee, peers out into the darkness, stands as if listening intently, then begins to pace up and down as if in great anxiety.)

THE CHIEF

(Talking to himself.)

Not a sound — They should be back by now —
What can have happened? — What can have
happened? — I will go in and try to sleep again.
— If the medicine stick is not recovered —
Woe and misfortune! —

(The CHIEF goes into his teepee.)

(The POOR BOY enters cautiously, carrying the med-
icine stick.)

POOR BOY

(Triumphantly, to himself.)

I've got it! I, the Poor Boy! — Oh, I am so
tired and sleepy! —

(He lies down by the fire, the medicine stick beside
him, and instantly falls asleep.)

(Far-off music is heard, and a voice calling. The
VISION appears as before.)

VISION

Poor Boy! —— Poor Boy! ——

POOR BOY

(Rising on one knee and stretching out his arms.)
Oh, mighty Spirit ——

VISION

Poor Boy, have you become a warrior?

POOR BOY

Mighty Spirit, I have become a warrior. The braves of the hostile tribe have fled before me. And I have brought back the sacred medicine stick.

VISION

You have done well. But many troubles are still before you. Does your tribe yet know you for the great warrior that you are?

POOR BOY

No. For when I fought, I fought alone. No one of my tribe saw me. I did not go with our warriors. They would not let me. I crept into the hostile village from the other side. When in the distance I heard our braves attacking I entered. I drove away the warriors who were guarding the medicine stick and seized it. Then I pursued these hostile warriors. They fled from me. I came to the place where they were fighting with our warriors. With my tomahawk I rushed among them. All fled. Then I came back here beside the fire.

VISION

But how will the Chief and the warriors know all this if no one saw you?

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

POOR BOY

I shall tell them.

VISION

Will they believe you?

POOR BOY

(Slowly.)

No _____. You are right. They will not believe me. They will not pay any attention to me. I am the Poor Boy still. What shall I do, mighty Spirit, what shall I do?

VISION

Listen to my words; and I will guide you.

POOR BOY

I am listening, mighty Spirit.

VISION

First of all, hide the medicine stick.

POOR BOY

I will do it, mighty Spirit. Then_____?

VISION

A great warrior does not boast of his deeds. They will taunt and abuse you. But you must keep silent. And do not grieve; for in spite of all the truth will be known.

POOR BOY

It is hard, mighty Spirit _____.

VISION

Do not despair. A man does great and brave deeds. He thinks no one knows. But we of the Spirit Land know. He is scorned. But we of the Spirit

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

Land do not scorn him. And in the course of time the truth becomes known; and he who was scorned is honored. However lowly he is, if he does his work well, let him not think that it is forgotten.

I have spoken. Remember my words.

(Calling.)

O-ha-ye! O-ha-ye!

SPIRIT VOICES

(In the distance)

O-ha-ye! O-ha-ye!

(The VISION disappears.)

(The POOR BOY sinks back on the ground. After a moment he wakens and sits up, bewildered, rubbing his eyes. Then he recollects the words of the Vision. He takes the medicine stick and goes off into the bushes with it. After a moment the CHIEF comes in.)

CHIEF

The warriors are not back yet!

(The POOR BOY comes in again.)

CHIEF

Poor Boy, where are the warriors?

POOR BOY

I do not know, great Chief.

CHIEF

You have come back alone! You did not stay with the warriors. Give me back the weapons I gave you. You are no warrior. You have deserted your comrades on the war path. Your weapons! (The CHIEF takes the Poor Boy's weapons from him.)

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

CHIEF

Go sit by the fire where you belong. You are no warrior. Never ask me for weapons again.

POOR BOY

Great Chief ——

(He stops, remembering the advice of the Vision.)

CHIEF

Can the warriors have been defeated? —— Hark!

(A faint noise is heard in the distance.)

POOR BOY

They are coming.

CHIEF

Silence, Poor Boy.

(The WARRIORS come in. They are out of breath from running. Their clothing is torn. Their head-dresses are falling from their heads.)

CHIEF

Warriors, where is the medicine stick?

FIRST WARRIOR

We did not find it, great Chief.

CHIEF

Woe! Woe! The medicine stick is lost. Misfortune will come upon us. Warriors —— you are not warriors; you are women.

FIRST WARRIOR

Great Chief, we fought bravely. But they were ready for us. Still we fought them. Then suddenly a band of terrible warriors fell upon them and upon us. The hostile tribe fled. And we fled, too.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

CHIEF

You fled!

SECOND WARRIOR

Chief, there were thousands of them.

SIXTH WARRIOR

I, the big warrior, killed multitudes of them. But what could we do?

FOURTH WARRIOR

We fled a long way around through the woods.

Great Chief, what shall we do if they come to this village?

SECOND WARRIOR

Let us get something to eat first. We can't fight when we're hungry. Bad to be hungry — bad — bad —

CHIEF

Do you think only of things to eat? Bring back the medicine stick or never dare to call yourselves warriors again.

(The CHIEF goes out.)

FIRST WARRIOR

Where is the Poor Boy?

FOURTH WARRIOR

Here he is, sitting by the fire.

THIRD WARRIOR

Where are your weapons?

POOR BOY

The Chief took them away from me.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

FIFTH WARRIOR

Ugh!

SIXTH WARRIOR

He has been sitting by the fire all the time while we, the big warriors, were fighting.

FIRST WARRIOR

He is always asking for weapons. When he has them he is afraid to use them.

FIRST WARRIOR

The Chief is angry with us. Why isn't he angry with the Poor Boy, too?

SIXTH WARRIOR

Coward!

(He strikes the POOR BOY, who with difficulty refrains from striking back.)

THIRD WARRIOR

Drive him from our camp!

(A shout is heard outside. The HOSTILE INDIAN appears. The WARRIORS give a howl of terror and start to run away. The SIXTH WARRIOR stumbles and falls flat on the ground. He gets up hurriedly and hides behind a bush or the stump of a tree.)

FIRST WARRIOR

He is making the peace sign. Come back!

(The WARRIORS return, all except the SIXTH WARRIOR, who remains in his hiding place.)

HOSTILE INDIAN

Warriors, I bring peace.

FIRST WARRIOR

Welcome, bringer of peace! —— Call the Chief.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

WARRIORS

Great Chief! Great Chief!

(The CHIEF enters.)

CHIEF

You have called me, warriors. Has the medicine stick been brought back?

FIRST WARRIOR

One of the hostile tribe has come, offering us peace.

CHIEF

There can be no peace until the sacred medicine stick is returned to us.

HOSTILE INDIAN

I do not understand your meaning. Your warriors have already brought the sacred stick to your camp.

CHIEF

Is this so? Warriors, speak, where is it?

(The WARRIORS look at one another in bewilderment.)

CHIEF

Speak! Why do you not answer?

FIRST WARRIOR

Great Chief, we have not seen the medicine stick.

HOSTILE INDIAN

A mighty warrior was with your braves when they attacked our camp. He came alone upon us from the further side. He killed our bravest warriors and carried off the medicine stick. We fled before him; but we are not ashamed. He is a great

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

warrior. Question him. He will know where your medicine stick is. Where is the great warrior?

ALL THE WARRIORS

I am the great warrior.

HOSTILE INDIAN

(Looking them over carefully.)

Ugh! These are not warriors.

CHIEF

That is true. But there are no others.

(The POOR BOY gets up to put some wood on the fire. The HOSTILE INDIAN recognizes him.)

HOSTILE INDIAN

There he is! The great warrior!

THIRD WARRIOR

(Laughing.)

And it's only the Poor Boy!

HOSTILE INDIAN

(Approaching the POOR BOY deferentially.)

Mighty warrior, my tribe sends me to you to ask for peace. You have taken away the medicine stick. You have conquered our warriors.

(The CHIEF and the WARRIORS gather around them in astonishment.)

CHIEF

What are you saying? The medicine stick?

HOSTILE INDIAN

This warrior seized it and bore it out through the midst of our camp though six of our braves threw themselves upon him.

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

CHIEF

You are mistaken. This is no warrior. It is only the Poor Boy. He knows nothing about the medicine stick.

POOR BOY

Great Chief, send someone into the bushes. Let him look in the third bush in the direction of the sunrise from the great tree.

CHIEF

(To the THIRD WARRIOR)

Search the bushes.

(The THIRD WARRIOR goes out.)

CHIEF

Where is the big warrior? Perhaps in the darkness this warrior mistook him for the Poor Boy.

FIRST WARRIOR

Yes. Where is the big warrior?

ALL

(Calling)

Big Warrior! Big Warrior!

(The SIXTH WARRIOR sticks his head out from his hiding place.)

SIXTH WARRIOR

Has he gone?

(The HOSTILE INDIAN turns round and looks at him. The SIXTH WARRIOR sees him, and with a howl of terror, jumps up and runs off.)

ALL THE WARRIORS

(Derisively)

Big Warrior! Big Warrior!

(The THIRD WARRIOR comes out of the bushes carrying the Medicine Stick.)

THE POOR BOY WHO BECAME A GREAT WARRIOR

POOR BOY

Great Chief, did I speak the truth?

CHIEF

You are the greatest warrior of our tribe.

HOSTILE INDIAN

Mighty warrior, accept these gifts.

CHIEF

You are chief next to me.

(The CHIEF and the HOSTILE INDIAN give the POOR BOY a great feather head dress and weapons and long strings of beads.)

HOSTILE INDIAN

Let there be a lasting peace between our tribes.

CHIEF

Warriors, begin the dance of victory.

(The tom-tom sounds. The WARRIORS begin to dance and sing the Victory Song.)

END OF THE PLAY





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